



Editorial

CBOT: our constant challenge



CBOT: o nosso desafio constante

Recently, we had another Brazilian Congress of Orthopedics and Traumatology (CBOT), this time in the city of Rio de Janeiro, with its beauty and joyfulness and the warmhearted competence of its inhabitants.

Rio has a great tradition of congresses, starting with the one at the Quitandinha, the first major Brazilian congress, and continuing to today's international congresses for updates on orthopedics and traumatology, which have marked out the era and set the standard.

The invitations issued to foreigners, rigorous control over timing, detailed organization and majestic social events have made these orthopedics and traumatology congresses a reference point.

Some might say that was another era.

This is a comfortable way of avoiding comparison with the brilliant past.

What has changed in orthopedics and in its congresses?

In my opinion, the subspecialties of orthopedics are the major novelty. They are ever-larger and stronger, and they attract specific sponsors who seek consumers who have already been channeled in a certain direction.

This interest in subspecialties translates the present moment in medicine, which has become divided in order to make it easier to comprehend. It is almost impossible for someone to keep up to date and have practical experience within the entire spectrum of orthopedics and traumatology.

We all start from the same basic principles and we specialize more and more so that we will be able to perform our professional activities better.

The basis continues to be orthopedics and traumatology, which at all times helps us to comprehend the practices of the specialty. Without this basis, we would gradually lose our solid grasp of our specific fields.

How would we perform fixation of osteotomies without the principles of osteosynthesis that have become established through traumatology? How would we treat arthrosis without basic knowledge of the physiology and general characteristics of this disease? How would we establish diagnoses of pain in

limbs without knowledge of vertebral syndromes? And there are so many other examples.

Updating our knowledge is a necessary practice at all levels.

Congresses are our main means for keeping up to date and space at congresses is dedicated to novelties and to the concepts defined within medicine, orthopedics and specific areas within this specialty.

The most recent CBOTs have had this format and have become a great success in terms of attendance numbers.

Addition of value to specialties, by bringing back a one-day period (the so-called "day of the specialty") for communicating important new events within medicine but without becoming separated from the basic and general themes of orthopedics, is a formula that has been working well.

However, one unknown factor still persists: the cost of congresses.

The number of places capable of receiving more than 5,000 participants (which was the number at CBOT in Rio), with the presentation areas required, are few. They are also expensive.

The trend is for this number to increase. Only 30% of the participants at recent CBOTs have been paid-up members of the Brazilian Society of Orthopedics and Traumatology (SBOT), but the society has more than 12,000 members on its register.

From a technical viewpoint, ever-greater investments in presentation and publicity systems are required.

Publicity material has to reach increasingly large numbers of people but the postal system is expensive and is becoming out of date. This makes electronic publicity systems necessary, and these are becoming not only more expensive, but also more sophisticated.

Even enrolment, which used to be done via a payment form sent by post, is being replaced by sophisticated electronic processes.

Since we are still in a period of transition, we have to introduce and use electronic means, which enable an infinite variety of controls and assessments. However, we have to maintain the post-based systems, because we have not

completely adapted to electronic means. Thus, we have a double cost.

The presentational methods used today are sophisticated and require high-quality audiovisual equipment operated by rare professionals with appropriate skills. Whereas presentations used to be made only with the aid of slides in carousels, today they are made with films and animations that require increasingly expensive equipment.

There are also the social activities, which reach very high costs, especially because of unpredictable factors.

Congresses are, in themselves, social activities. Congress participants spend many hours in this environment. Therefore, there is a need for catering facilities, communication centers and social areas.

Social events outside of this environment and outside of the congress hours are difficult to organize.

For how many people should a social event for orthopedists be organized?

It is not uncommon for an event to be organized for the number of people enrolled in the congress and to be attended by only 10%, which generates enormous useless expenditure.

It is clear that social events have to be provided, but this should be done in a specific and directed manner, which makes them more economical and efficient in their objective of enabling social interaction.

There is one fundamental factor in holding our congresses with all the features mentioned above: our sponsors.

The relationship with our sponsors is going through a difficult time, given that commercial relationships between

doctors and anything that is not free or explicitly listed are regarded as doubtful.

Sponsorship, which is so common in other activities, has been greatly questioned in the field of medicine.

We have always had the ability to deal with our sponsors, who, over the years, have made it possible for our specialty to evolve, through sponsorship of courses and funding for invitations to important foreign specialists. I am sure that we will surmount this situation.

Our patients will be our biggest allies in this difficult process of making society understand that medicine does not differ from other professional activities, since it too requires investments and updates, and therefore sponsorship.

We have nothing to fear, because we are creditors in the balance of our relationship with society in general.

The annual CBOT is the biggest item of business of the SBOT, which is a strong and mature society that will know how to cope with and overcome its new difficulties.

We are already setting up the 47th CBOT, which will take place in São Paulo.

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